

## HONORING MINNESOTA COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUCCESS AT WEATHERIZING HOMES

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### HON. BETTY McCOLLUM OF MINNESOTA IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Tuesday, January 12, 2010

Ms. McCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the many workers and contractors who are part of Minnesota Community Action Partnership weatherization programs. Minnesota is being honored this week by the U.S. Department of Energy as one of the top five states in the country for its work utilizing *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* funds to weatherize homes.

The installation of blower doors, energy efficient water heaters and furnaces, improved insulation, and energy efficient windows is vital work that saves energy, saves money, and helps low-income households. During the last year, Minnesota Community Action Partnership organizations have used *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* funds to help weatherize an additional 17,000 homes. These investments are saving families an average of \$350 in energy costs this year and keeping them warm during Minnesota's coldest months.

I have seen the benefits of this work first hand through the Community Action Partnership of Ramsey and Washington Counties (CAPRW), which serves a majority of my constituents. Under the guidance of Executive Director Clarence Hightower, CAPRW has been able to serve over 200,000 low-income households each year, and over the past 30 years has completed energy improvements on over 13,000 homes. CAPRW invested funds from the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* to expand the number of homes weatherized in our community by more than three times. As a result, the community benefited from new jobs, a cleaner environment, and lower energy costs for working class families.

These Recovery Act investments are strengthening our community by allowing Community Action Agencies to build on the legacy begun in 1964 as part of President Johnson's Economic Opportunity Act, which served as a major step in the war on poverty. Today, Community Action Agencies continue to provide a wide variety of services to those living in poverty. In addition to weatherization efforts, local agencies also offer energy assistance, Head Start and Early Head Start programs, training programs for job training, financial literacy, and education, as well as senior nutrition programs. These efforts build stronger communities by providing opportunities for families to work towards economic independence.

Madam Speaker, in honor of the recognition by the U.S. Department of Energy of Minnesota's Weatherization Programs as one of the top in the nation, I am pleased to submit this statement for the Congressional Record recognizing this achievement and the hard work and dedication of our Community Action Agencies in fighting poverty.

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